

VZCZCXYZ0011
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #2481/01 2050908
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 240908Z JUL 06
FM AIT TAIPEI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1224
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5448
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 6655

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 002481

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - ERIC BARBORIAK
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: DPP PARTY CONGRESS, MIDDLE EAST

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their coverage July 22-24 on the DPP party congress, in which the DPP decided to return to collective leadership and to dissolve party factions; and the Grand Justices' ruling last Friday on the constitutionality of the National Communications Commission. The pro-independence "Liberty Times" ran a front-page banner headline July 23 that read "Yu Shyi-kun: DPP Must Return to Collective Leadership." The pro-status quo "China Times" also ran a banner headline on page four July 22 that said "Issuing Statement Prior to DPP Congress, Bian Says He Wants to Accomplish Unfinished Missions, Will Neither Resign Nor Quit Party."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "China Times" editorial said the DPP's congress was concluded, but the party's trial is just about to begin. The article added that President Chen Shui-bian, the game of power in the post-Bian era, and the year-end Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral elections are the factors that will decide whether the DPP will walk out of its current predicament in the next six months. An editorial in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" urged the DPP to "walk the talk" to improve its reputation for political integrity. An editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post," on the other hand, discussed the crisis in the Middle East, urging Israel to exercise restraint and bring peace back to the Middle East. End summary.

¶3. DPP Party Congress

A) "Trial That DPP Should Undergo Is Just About to Begun"

The pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (7/24):

"... Many pro-independence heavyweights said they want to give President Chen a six-month grace period. For the DPP, the next six months following the conclusion of the party congress is also very critical. Several factors are involved as to decide whether the DPP will recover or collapse: The first factor is of course President Chen. ... Chen will enjoy a greater maneuvering space following his announcement to 'relinquish some of his powers.' He may likely continue to restrain the party line and policy direction by forming a strategic alliance with the deep-Green elders and social groups. The Sustainable Economic Development Conference will be one of the indicators [to monitor Chen's moves].

"The second factor is the game of power in the post-Bian era, that is, whether the DPP can move from the collective leadership now to a new leadership; or to put it plainly, does Su Tseng-chang have a chance to become a new leader? ... The final factor will be the year-end Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral races. Even though they are just elections for the mayors and city council members in two

special municipalities in northern and southern Taiwan, they have clear indicator significance: Namely, they will tell whether public opinion is satisfied with the DPP's performance after the party's reflection and reform for the next six months. ...

"Over the next six months, the DPP's look will be: a political party that has entered the post-Bian era in its form, but in which Chen's influence remains omnipresent; a political party which said it has dissolved all factions, but in which all factions remain active; and a political party which has passed clean politics regulations, but remains inactive in dealing with its core clean politics issues. Let's just wait and see if the DPP can really walk out of its predicament."

B) "Time for DPP to Walk the Talk"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (7/24):

"The governing Democratic Progressive Party took a major step toward recovery yesterday by adopting more moves to improve its reputation for political integrity, begin a transition back to collective and democratic leadership after over six years of 'charismatic' domination by President Chen Shui-bian and, at least partially, revive guidance by progressive and democratic values. ...

"Whether the DPP will truly be able to 'move the Taiwan people' and regain their confidence will not be decided by any panacea, but by whether Taiwan's party of democracy and progress can return to the 'Taiwan road' in more than words and truly 'walk the talk.' The pressure to rebuild the DPP's reputation will be borne mainly by Premier Su Tseng-chang, who has gained a dominant hand in the party leadership in alliance with DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun and is now the party's front-runner or the March 2008 presidential race and now must show his ability to both articulate and execute progressive policies. ..."

4. Middle East

"Mideast's Never-Ending Crisis"

The conservative, pro-independence, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] noted in an editorial (7/24):

"... With the United States and Great Britain, the two chief supporters of Israel, ready to mediate, the armed conflict in southern Lebanon is expected to come to an end shortly, but peace will never return. ... The only way to peace between the Jewish state and the Arab nation is for the Israelis to accept the Christian virtue of turning their right cheeks to their enemy when their left cheeks are slapped. They are strong enough to practice self-restraint. As a matter of fact, the Israelis overreacted to trigger the war. Nobody thinks it plausible for Israel to invade Gaza and attack Lebanon just to rescue three captured soldiers, two of them held by Hezbollah. The restraint from retaliation on the part of the Israelis will finally convince the Arabs that they all will be able to live in peace. It takes decades or maybe a century before the Arabs will finally come to accept the Israelis as their cousins again. They are. They were before 1948. Their common ancestor is Abraham."

YOUNG